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# Iranian Filmmaker: Iran & U.S. Have Much in Common

**By Michael Collins Piper**

Touring the United States, putting together a documentary film he hopes will prevent a war between the United States and Iran, Iranian filmmaker Nader Talebzadeh sat down with AFP to talk about the growing U.S.-Iran crisis and relate his efforts to reach out to Americans in an open dialogue to discuss why it is vital for the two countries to seek peace.

"America is a religious country and so is Iran. On that basis," he said, "I can see a future close relationship between the American people and the Iranian people, after this current crisis comes to an end. Religion is a great common ground. And Americans — like Iranians — also have a deep sense of patriotism."

Talebzadeh has interviewed a broad cross-section of Americans who come together on one issue: they oppose the idea of a war against Iran as dangerous and unnecessary.

Many of those the filmmaker has met with have been academics — "from Boston to Berkeley" as he put it — noting that the working title of his forthcoming documentary is "From Tehran to Texas." Talebzadeh was quite impressed with the state of Texas and its people. "Texas," he commented,"is like a country all its own but one which represents the heart and soul of America."

As a Muslim, Talebzadeh was pleased he was able to build a special rapport with fundamentalist Christians who were skeptical of dealing with a Muslim from an "evil" country, as George W. Bush described Iran.

But Talebzadeh was able to build kinship on the basis of religion, letting Christians know that "every day when we Muslims get up at dawn and pray to God, we are praying for the safe and timely return of Jesus Christ." This is something, he noted, most Christians don't understand about Islam.

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In Talebzadeh's judgment, much anti-Islamic hostility is the consequence of political propagandizing by what he candidly referred to as "Zionist" elements determined to stop Christians from learning how much there is in common between Islam and Christianity.

On Oct. 11, Talebzadeh attended a Capitol Hill briefing organized by Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio). Equally outspoken in his opposition to the Bush regime's intentions against the Islamic Republic of Iran as he was to the Bush drive to eviscerate the secular republic of Iraq, Kucinich brought together an array of observers who laid bare the disinformation put forth in furtherance of the Israeli lobby-promoted scheme to destroy Iran.

As a consequence of the building confrontation with Iran, Talebzadeh sees America going through a subtle transformation process. The transformation, he believes, arises from the realization by many Americans that they have lost control of their own government that is now carrying out policies that could prove disastrous not only to Iran but to America.

In that vein, Talebzadeh cited remarks by one of those who spoke at the Capitol Hill seminar, Joseph Cirincione of the Center for American Progress, who said, "If you like the war in Iraq, wait until you see the war in Iran. It will be a massive, global war."

Talebzadeh predicts Americans will ultimately change the direction of their government and that the United States will not continue to act as an empire but that it will survive as a free republic, transformed for the better.

A journalist specializing in media critique, Michael Collins Piper is the author of ***Final Judgment***, the controversial "underground bestseller" documenting the collaboration of Israeli intelligence in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He is also the author of ***The High Priests of War***, ***The New Jerusalem***, ***The Judas Goats***, and ***Dirty Secrets***, all available from First Amendment Books and America First Books. He has lectured on suppressed topics in places as diverse as Malaysia, Japan, Canada, Russia and Abu Dhabi.

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